

*Sacred Authority of Christian Bishops, and
the Piety of Praying for them in Prison.*

Recommended in a *N^o 13*

S E R M O N

Preach'd at

ROCHESTER Cathedral,

OCTOBER 7, 1722.

dedicated to the CLERGY of the DIOCESE
of ROCHESTER.

CHARLES CHAMBRES, A. M. Vicar
of DARTFORD in KENT.

ter therefore was kept in Prison, but Prayer was made
without ceasing of the Church unto God for him. Acts 12. 5.

THE SECOND EDITION.



L O N D O N:

Printed for J. HOOKE over-against St. Dunstan's
Church, in Fleetstreet, and Sold by J. ROBERTS
in Warwick Lane, 1722. (Price Six Pence.)

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the Bishop of Salisbury

DEDICATION



To the REVEREND the
CLERGY
OF THE
Diocese of ROCHESTER.

Reverend Brethren,

IN the present unfortunate Circumstances of our Right Reverend Diocesan, I thought the best Testimony I was capable of giving, of my Duty to Him, and Friendship to You, next to my Remembrance of him in my own Prayers, was to Recommend him to the Devotion of all sincere Christians. The first, I earnestly and incessantly do; and the last, I have endeavoured to do, upon the best Principles of Religion in this Sermon.

YOU

DEDICATION.

YOU will, I hope, justly perceive, that I have not publish'd it to Impeach or to Flatter the Wisdom and Justice of the Administration; neither to Conceal nor to Pate the high Crime of Treason; but to Affirm in Season, the Justness of our own Christian Principles, and to Recommend the Beauty of Humanity and Charity. With these Views I hope I may be excused in recommending it to the Perusal of any true Christian; and particularly, in introducing it to their more favourable Regard, under the Publick Reputation of your Names;

I am,

Beloved and Worthy Brethren,

Your most Affectionate

and Obedient Servant,

Ch. Chambre.



ACTS XII. Verse .5.

Peter therefore was kept in Prison, but Prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him.

SAINTE PETER was an Apostle, and one of the first Bishops of the Christian Church, to whom with his Brethren of the Apostolical Church, our Blessed Saviour had committed the Government of all his Disciples. Kings were exempted from a Subjection to the Episcopal Rule, when they became subject to the Christian Faith and the Constitution of the Gospel.

AND as our Saviour dignified his Apostles with a Vicegerent Dispensation of the Gospel; he invested them with Power sufficient to support the Dignity, and to answer all the Ends of that most eminent and sacred Trust: And

particularly to transmit their Authority to Successors in all future Ages, for the perpetual Profession of the Christian Religion, according to the uniform and original Institution of it.

THIS Station therefore of a Christian Governor, *St. Peter* was placed in, as a Pattern of the Character and Authority to be sustained and exercised by all Christian Bishops in succeeding Ages.

BUT tho' *St. Peter* was directly dignified with a spiritual Dominion over our Lord's Household of Faith, yet this sacred Character did not screen him from the Violence and Treatment of Irreligious Men. This Primitive Father and Apostle was put in Prison under a strong Guard of Soldiers, and was very soon to be sacrific'd to the Malice of the unbelieving Jews.

THE objected Crime for which he was imprisoned and to be slain, was the holy Religion of his Saviour, which he zealously profess'd. Which Religion as it was design'd by God, to dispel the Errors, restrain the Iniquity, and comfort the Prejudices of Mankind, as well as to put an End to the *Mosaical* Dispensation, fulfilling the Prophecies, and spiritualizing the carnal Ordinances of it, so it could not fail especially when it was first promulg'd, drawing against it the Antipathy and Revenge of the Jews and Gentiles.

ACCORDINGLY our Lord himself fell a Victim of their concerted Opposition, as would

a Sacrifice for their Sins, and was the high-
 Instance of the Impiety and Barbarity of
 wicked Men. And his Disciples according to his
 predictions, sustained the *Hatred of them who*
hated him, and the *Persecutions of them which*
persecuted him, by the Contempt and Calum-
 ny, the bodily Smart and Imprisonment, and
 sundry kinds of Death which they en-
 dured after our Lord's Example and for his
 Truth's Sake.

So particularly in this Chapter of my Text,
 Herod the King, a Gentile in Religion, *stretch'd*
forth his Hands to vex certain of the Church;
and he killed James the Brother of John with
the Sword. And because it pleased the Jews he
 proceeded farther to take Peter also. And when
 he apprehended him, he put him into Prison, and
 deliver'd him to four Quaternions of Soldiers,
 i. e. under the Centry of four military Per-
 sons in each Watch, to be relieved as their
 Commander directed) *intending after Easter,*
bringing him forth to the People. Peter there-
 fore was kept in Prison.

BUT to relieve him under his hard Cir-
 cumstances, the severe Intention of Herod,
 and the cruel Expectation of the Jews : Prayer
 was made by the Church without ceasing to
 pray for him. When they had no visible Re-
 medy to save their holy Bishop from the Vio-
 lence intended him, they with one Consent
 had Recourse to Prayer, peradventure God
 would be Gracious, and hear their unanimous
 and

and fervent Supplications ; which in Fact the merciful Redeemer did, and sent his Angel set at Liberty his chosen Apostle. In a Manner St. *Peter* was seasonably rescued by God himself, further to plant and superintend his true Religion in the World,

FROM this pious Example, and the happy Success of it, I shall in this Discourse begin to recommend in General the Duty and Consolation of Prayer in Times of Distress.

SECONDLY, Apply it to the particular Case of my Text, St. *Peter* in Prison.

THIRDLY, Apply it to the present Condition of This Church, as far as the different Circumstances of the Primitive and Present Condition of Christianity will innocently admit.

FIRST, I would recommend in General the Duty and Consolation of Prayer, in Times of Distress.

THERE is nothing more immediately flows from natural Religion, than the Devotion of calling unto the Lord in Distress. GOD is plainly written upon the Heart of every Man, and we all by the Light of our Nature, view him there as the CREATOR, SUSTAINER and DEFENDER of all his Creatures. Therefore when we fall into Calamity, and the deeper we sink into it, the nearer we behold him to us ; the more able we confess him

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diver us, and the louder we cry unto him for
 help. This is the Language of the Atheistical,
 who in the Time of their wanton Prosperity
 we not God in all their Thoughts, to call
 on the Lord in Distress for the Help they
 Acknowledge he is able to extend, and which
 they are conscious they do not deserve. Affliction
 is a softening Power to subdue the Perverse-
 ness and Pride of that Heart which *goeth from*
its Maker; and to bring it back to a Sense of
 its Sufficiency in all Things, and Forgotten
 glory. Experience is a sensible Argument of
 our Need, and intire Dependance upon our
 Creator, which the Distress we feel, and can-
 not remedy, applies home to our Consciences,
 and makes us *fall down and kneel before the*
Lord our Maker.

AND the more publick any Calamity is,
 the more general ought the Application to be
 for Relief. The good and evil Contingencies
 of a Society are communicated Blessings and
 curses, and extend their Influences to the ex-
 treme Bounds of the Community; and there-
 fore ought to be solicited and deprecated with
 general Voice and Prostration of Knees.
 As Nature directs us to join our selves in
 Society, so she represents to us the Expedien-
 cy, and puts us upon the Means of procuring
 the Advantages, and averting the Misfortunes
 of it. Whatever Good we do to the Society
 we are enfranchised in, it flows back to us a-
 gain, not only in our share of the Benefit,

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augmented perhaps in its Circulation, but in the Satisfaction which accrues from the Opinion of being Benefactors, So on the contrary, whatever Evil or Detriment we effect, or occasion to the same Community, we partake of the Venom, besides the Remorse we sustain in distressing our own Body, whereof we our selves are the Members, and which liberally extends to us the social Blessings of our Communion.

UPON these Accounts our united Prayers to the all-sufficient Deity in Times of common Distress, is a natural Duty: For as he is able to deliver a private Person from his private Affliction; so He is to deliver a Community from any general Calamity. And the more Publick are the Views of our Petitions, the more Important they are, and the more likely therefore to be return'd by him who is *loving unto every Man*, and maketh *his Sun to shine*, and *his Rain to descend*, to renew the Earth of the *Just and Unjust*. And if we succeed in our general Intercession, there is a Consolation in what we have done, and an Encouragement to be constant to the same Duty upon every return of the same Occasion.

How likely we are to be Benefited by such joint Devotions, I had rather refer you to Experience than to Arguments; though we have various Arguments of comfortable Consideration to incite us to such happy Experience both from Reason and Scripture.

First, FROM

(II)

First, FROM Reason; Hereby we publickly ho-
our God's Power and Goodness, and provoke
*him to * honour us again by some Distinction*
of his Favour. We honour his Power in post-
poning the Aid of all Beings, to his Assist-
ance: We also honour his Goodness in the
unshakable Hope and Trust our unanimous Ad-
versaries supposes of seasonable Relief. Hereby
we acknowledge how feeble, how precarious,
how vain is the Help of Man! How Powerful,
how Exorable, how Perfect the Help of our God!
Hereby also we intimate a just Contempt of
the sinful Malice and Opposition of Men,
when God is on our side. Thus confessing the
infinite Allurement of the divine Goodness to
obey, and the irresistible Energy of the di-
vine Power to enable our God to fulfil the
Desires of them that fear him.

HEREBY also we honour God's *Wisdom,*
by the perfect Resignation of all our Desires to
that divine Perfection which knoweth our Ne-
cessities before we ask, and our Ignorance in
asking; and which always fulfils the Desires
and Petitions of his Servants, as is most expe-
dient for them. Hereby having the Consolation,
that God when we call upon him in the Time
of Trouble, will either remove, or ease the
dolorous Pungency of our Case; remove if
our Patience, Resignation and Repentance are

perfected; or continue it with a Measure of Grace to improve these Perfections; kind turning all the Occasions of our Afflictions into Medicines *to heal our Sickness*, or into Rewards of our *patient Continuance in well doing*.

Secondly, From Scripture we have abundant Assurances of the Duty and Success of Prayer. And here, in the Old Testament cannot refer you to a better Witness than *David*, whose intimate Communication with the Spirit of God, and his habitual Exercise of Prayer, qualifie him to be an unexceptionable Judge. He brings God, laying his special Intercourse on his People *Israel* to this Duty
 * *Call thou upon me in the Day of Trouble and I will hear thee, and thou shalt praise me*.
 He exemplifies the Truth of this divine Promise, by recording various Instances of divine Succours to this People for their Compliance with it, particularly in their tedious and painful Travel through the Wilderness; where *when they called unto the Lord in their Trouble, he delivered them out of their Distress. Yea, many a time did he deliver them*. Though the Character of this People, is, that they were a stiff-necked Generation, and a People who cleaved not stedfastly unto God, falling away like their Forefathers. † *Nevertheless*

when he saw their Adversity, he heard
 their Complaint. He instances the same divine
 goodness towards himself, *I called upon the
 Lord in Trouble, and the Lord heard me at
 large.* He gives a general Assurance unto all
 men of the like Success, ** the Lord is nigh
 to all them that call upon him, yea, all such
 call upon him faithfully.——He also will
 hear their Cry, and will help them.* And in
 consequence of all together, he fixes this Re-
 solution upon himself, *† as for me I will call
 upon God, and the Lord shall save me.*

AND if upon the foot of Nature, and the
 with Religion, the Motives of Prayer in
 times of Distress are so inviting, how much
 more Persuasion do they bring with them,
 when consider'd upon the Principles and Pri-
 vileges of Christ's Religion.

No Religion so well illuminates our Minds
 with the Knowledge of our selves, and of
 God, and of our social Obligations, The three
 primary Inducements to divine Supplications.
 No Religion so well enforces a Behaviour con-
 formable to such Knowledge, because founded
 upon the best *Promises*. For though by the Light of
 Nature, we had some glimmering Prospect of a
 future State, grounded upon the absolute E-
 ternity of the divine Nature, and the promif-
 cuous Dispensation of Things here: And
 though

* Psalm cxlv. 18.

† Psalm lvi. 16.

though the same be shadow'd out in the
cal Revelations of *Moses* and the Proph
yet the unerring Certainty and Conditions
our immortal State were reserved to the
monstration of the Spirit, by the Revelation
Christ Jesus and his Apostles, and was * *brou*
to Light through the Gospel.

No Religion is besides so extensive, or
divine in the Obligations of Charity ; and c
sequently leads the way to the most gene
and *disinterested* Intercessions, by comman
ing us to Love our Adversaries of whatsoe
sort, to do Good to them that hate us, to p
for them that despitefully use and persecute
and to forgive Injuries receiv'd, as we wo
be for given our Sins ; in short, to Love o
another, as Christ hath loved us. Rooting
by these Precepts of unlimited Charity the
 distinctions of Parties ; taming the Animosit
and Resentments of Pride, Envy, Hatred ; a
melting down Revenge by the warmth of t
heavenly Wisdom, † *which is first pure, t*
peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full
Mercy and good Fruits.

BUT still one of the most effectual Enc
ragements to our divine Addresses, is the m
perfect Assurance of Success in the Mediat
of our Saviour *Jesus Christ*. Our Nature
her Stains of Sin cou'd not address God as

* 2 Tim. i. 10.

† James, iii. 11

in her inoffensive State; she could not be
 but that *the Prayers of the Wicked* would
 be an *Abomination in his Sight*, and therefore
 for the Worthiest of her Kind to inter-
 cede for her more polluted Members. The
 Jews in their revealed Religion, had Medi-
 ators in the Mosaical Priesthood, to offer up
 sacrifices for the People, but These being in
 a great Number of *Miserable Sinners*, wanted an
 Accessor for themselves, and therefore were
 commanded to expect a more perfect Mediator,
 who should offer up a *Lamb without Spot* to Repre-
 sent them. But now that Mediator being come
 in the Person of Jesus Christ, Man without
 Sin, dignified by Union with the Divine Na-
 ture, and in whose Name all our Petitions are
 to be offered up, and by his Intercession fan-
 ctified; we derive from them all the Blessings
 which the Love and Merit of a Divine Redem-
 ption can procure. *For it is Christ that died,*
rather than that is risen again, who is even
the right Hand of God, who also maketh
intercession for us. For such an High Priest*
as we (Sinners) who is holy, harmless, un-
defiled, separate from Sinners, made higher
than the Heavens.† And now we know that
 whatsoever we ask in his Name he will do it,
that the FATHER may be Glorified in the SON.

* Rom. viij. 34.

† Heb. vij. 26.

WHAT.

WHATEVER therefore Intimations
 Experience of our own Insufficiency to
 answer our Wants in this casual World, may
 suggest to us of Prayer; whatever Light
 our own Nature may furnish us with of the
 divine Perfections, *to direct our Prayer unto him*
and to look up, as to a Being most able
 inclined to Understand and Fulfil it: Or what-
 ever Sentiments we have of Publick Virtue
 from the Experience of the Priviledges deriv'd
 from Society, to engage our Publick Interces-
 sions, in Publick Distresses; and whatever As-
 surances the Practice of Divine Prayer in Time
 of Old, and Divine Revelations of the Jewish
 Prophets, give of the Success of Prayer, the
 Reasons are all better enforced by the Re-
 velations of the Gospel.

Now the Duty of Prayer is more excellent
 in it's Motives, in it's Views, and in it's Nature
 and is become a more important, more divine
 more delightful, and more successful Duty
 draws us *near* to God, and gives us the Con-
 placency of beholding the Glory of his Per-
 fections; it draws Him *near to us*, and gives
 us the Consolation of feeling the beneficial
 Influences of them: In our gloomy Intervals
 refreshes us with the Joy of his Countenance
 in Distress, it is a present Relief: If we Use
 frequently, it is a Testimony of our Piety;
 we apply it to the Advantage of our Neigh-
 bour, it is an Argument of our Charity;
 we extend it to the Publick Welfare upon

occasions, we exercise that Disposition which
 our Saviour and his Apostles recommend, of
 doing Good unto all Men, and especially to
 them who are of the Household of Faith, i.e.
 we approve our selves profitable Members of
 the Universal Society of Mankind, and particu-
 larly Sincere and Wise in the Service of our
 Church and Country. Upon these important
 encouragements, I proceed,

Secondly, To apply the Piety of Christian
 Prayer to the particular Case in my Text, St.
 Peter in Prison.

THAT St. Peter was expressly consign'd to
 Governing Capacity in Christ's Catholick
 Church, is most evident from those plain
 Words of our Lord delivered to St. Peter, I
 give unto thee thou art Peter, and upon this
 Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates
 of Hell shall not prevail against it. And I
 will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of
 Heaven; whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth
 shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever
 thou shalt loose on Earth shall be loosed in
 Heaven.

YET that this Consignment of Church Go-
 vernment to St. Peter did not exclude the o-
 ther Apostles, is evident from the Occasion of
 Our Lord had put the Question to his
 twelve Apostles, Whom they said that he was?
 Peter in the Name of them all declared, saying;

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Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God
 Our Lord in his Reply said unto him, * *Thou art Peter*; (which by Interpretation is a Stone or Rock) intimating thereby in a Figure, that his Answer was the Confession of a true Faith and the *chief corner Stone* of Christianity, upon which our Lord promised to build his Church, and that no Evil Powers should prevail against it, nor the Grave extinguish. He then proceeded with a Promise to Invest the Government of that Church in those chosen Disciples who by St. *Peter* had made the first Confession of his Divine Generation, and to deliver to them the Power of the Keys (the Keys let us be sure to consider of the Kingdom of Heaven which our Lord is the eternal King of) which evidently implies the Power of Admitting, Excluding and Controlling the Believers in Christ according to the instituted Economy of the Gospel. And as a farther Testimony that this Trust was not designed for St. *Peter* alone, St. *John* bears Witness, that our Lord after his Resurrection so spake to the same Disciples, † *As my Father hath sent me so send I you; and he breathed on them and he said unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost whose soever Sins ye remit* (i. e. upon the Conditions of the Gospel delivered to them) *they shall be forgiven*.

* Matt. xvi, 18.

† John xx. 21.

remitted to them, and whose soever Sins ye remit, they are retained.

AND that this Ecclesiastical Government is *Transitive* from the Apostles to their Successors, is very manifest from the plain Testimony of St. *Matthew*, who says, that our Lord after his Resurrection, delivered himself in these solemn Words. * *All Power is given unto me in Heaven, and in Earth, Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Teaching them all Things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you always, even unto the End of the World.* This Presence is by all Interpreters understood of the Protection, Assistance, and concurrent Authority of our Lord, to those whom he thus ordained and sent to preach, and Baptize, and to shew Men all the Will of God in the Christian Institution. The Words were also delivered to the eleven Apostles, as it is manifest in the Context; yet nothing is plainer than that, as the Promise of our Lord extending to Perpetuity, did include these Apostles, so that it did not Terminate in them; and therefore was design'd to support and authorize the continual Christian Ministry. *i. e.* in their Ministrations by the Primitive Scheme of the Apostles, revealed to them by the Spirit

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of God, Exemplified in *Timothy* and *Titus* and Transmitted down to us, both by the Holy Scriptures and the Practice of the Universal Church.

WHENCE it is beyond every Exception clear, That our Lord Founded his Religion in the *Divinity of his Nature*; That He Instituted a visible Government to uphold the uniform Profession of it, That He Invested such Governors with the *same Authority*, which He received himself from the Father; That He *explicitly* Promised that what They did on Earth, according to Christian Revelation, should be confirm'd in Heaven, and that He would *with Them* in Earth, to the End of the World.

St. Peter was expressly Dignified in the Beginning with this Deputation, and the Church could not discharge Themselves, with that holy Respect and Charity which his Character and Misfortune required, without putting up their devout Prayers for him.

It was the Duty and Practice of the Primitive Christians to pray for one another, their Piety and Charity were exemplary in this respect; for then, there was that true Spirit of Sympathy and Unity between Christians that when ** one Member suffer'd, all the Members suffer'd with it.*

AND as they had a perfect Knowledge of Them who had the Rule over them, and of

* 1 Cor. ij. 26.

their spiritual Authority, so they paid a willing Obedience to their Commands, and all Reverence to their Persons, and also esteem'd them very highly in Love for their sakes. The zealous Affection and Piety of the Church to St. *Peter*, is an eminent Instance of this, when they all without ceasing set up their Prayers for him, the whole Church in a general Calamity shew'd themselves affected with his Misfortune, and out of a deep conviction of the Importance, of his Liberty to maintain the Cause, and promote the Propagation of Christianity, exalted their Supplications with a general Harmony, and in the name of Devotion brought down an *Angel* to deliver the *Saint*.

THIS Example, as well as all others of Christian Godliness, was written for our Instruction, that in like Circumstances we shou'd use the like Devotion. St. *Paul* affords us a clear Authority to support this Piety; when himself was a Prisoner in *Rome*, he sent an injunction † to the Hebrews to pray for him, and what is particularly observable, he, in the Verse before, prepares 'em with a Caution to obey them, who had the Rule over them, and to submit themselves to enforce his Precept; and in the Verse immediately after, he encourages them to it by intimating, that their Prayers

* 1 Thef. v. 13.

† Hebr. xiii. 18.

Prayers would contribute to his Liberty, *restore him to them the sooner.*

AND indeed, the Reasonableness of Piety sufficiently recommends it without particular Injunction, or primitive Example it. For if by the general Obligations of Christian Charity, we are to pray for all Christians in Distress, not excepting the mean and most unworthy; much less are we to excused from praying for the most worthy.

IF also we are commanded to pray for Enemies of our holy Faith, much more we obliged to pray for the best Promoters and Governors of it. If we are exhorted by *Paul, * first of all to pray for Kings, and those that are in Authority,* to bestow the Fruits of our Prayers in behalf of our Governors, either we must not pray at all for Christians in Distress, or must pray first for our distressed Governors, when they are fallen in such Condition; and which the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life, make them equally liable to with others. I have already proved the Authority of Christian Bishops and whether the Powers originally given and all along exercised by them, bear any Analogy to the Administration of the Civil Power, and tend to perfect the Government of Mankind, may easily be determin'd, by collecting;

* 1 Tim. ii. 2.

THAT Bishops lawfully called, derive their Authority of governing in Christ's Church from God, and were originally independent of the State, as to the Exercise of it; though since they became the *nursing Fathers*, and Queens *nursing Mothers* of the Christian Church, embracing the Faith, and giving it their Protection and Countenance, our Church at the Reformation ascrib'd to our King and his Successors, that Supremacy in Things Ecclesiastical, which all good Princes ought to have. St. *Paul*, who calls the temporal Sovereign, * *the Minister of God*, calls the Persons of the highest Character in the Church, *Ambassadors for Christ*. That to the Charge of the temporal Powers are committed the Lives, Bodies and Properties of their Subjects; to the Charge of the spiritual Powers the Souls of Men, under the Dispensation of the Gospel.

BUT because a Power to command, without some Sanctions of Obedience, wou'd be of very little Effect to the Purposes of a Government, therefore to the Dispensation of each of these are allotted Rewards and Punishments in this Life, though with an ultimate Regard to the Rewards and Punishments the next. Kings reward their meritorious servants by Stations of temporal Honour and Profit,

Profit, which their Circumstances enable to do. Bishops reward the obedient Members of Christ's Church, with their Benediction of the Name of God, and the Grace that is convey'd to them through their Ministry. And through the Power of the Sword, punish offenders with Sufferings, which affect the Body and temporal Life. Bishops, by the Power of the Keys deliver'd to them, exclude disobedient Christians from the Communion and Privileges of Christ's Church, and punish immoral Actions by Shame, in judicially pointing them publick Penance.

AND though through a long Relaxation of these latter Powers, the Lives of Christians degenerated almost to a heathenish Infidelity and Impiety; yet if ever the Spirit of Christianity revive again in its Discipline, Ecclesiastical Sanctions which are now *vain Words and Dreams*, will have a more prevailing Efficacy in bringing Christians to conformity to their Profession, than the sharpest corporal Chastisements; and the Favour of the Church be thought no less an Encouragement to a regular Piety, than the Favour of the temporal Sovereign to enforce the Duty of the civil Life.

THUS I have observ'd to you how sacred and how important to Salvation the Persons and Authority of Christian Bishops are. They are consecrated by the Holy Ghost, and with Power to be Overseers of the Flock of Christ. T

the Watchmen of Souls, and therefore the
 rectors of Men's Consciences in the true Be-
 lief and Obedience of the Gospel. They are
 appointed *for the Work of the Ministry, for
 perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying
 Body of Christ, till we all come in the U-
 nity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the
 will of God to a perfect Man, and the fullness
 of the Stature of Christ.*

FOR this End particularly they have Power
 to Ordain those which are found qualified by En-
 dowments of Piety and Learning, and inward-
 ly inclined to the holy Function. They are by
 the sacred Rite of Confirmation, to receive the
 Benedictions which Christians at Years of Dis-
 cretion make of themselves to Christ and his
 Religion, and to bless them for their Increase
 of Grace. They are, when their other pub-
 lic Cares for the well Government of God's
 people will admit, to preach the glad Tidings
 and Duties of the Gospel, and rightly and
 lawfully to administer the Christian Sacraments.
 They are in every Thing to adorn the Godly
 Religion of our Lord and Saviour, by giving
 Diligence to promote the outward Wor-
 ship of it in Decency and Order; and the
 inward Profession of it in Unity of Spirit, in
 Bond of Peace, and in Righteousness of

HENCE we may be easily convinced, that
 the Enemies of the Episcopal Authority, are
 Enemies to the Christian Religion it self, and

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must; whatever they intend, by destroying one, destroy the other. For *if the Foundations be cast down, what will the Righteous*, considered as Christians, *do*? If the Authority and Ordinances of our Lord, so plainly instituted in the Gospel, be over-ruled or defeated, what will Christianity be but a religious Confusion, like a Kingdom and People without any King and Governor. And it is as rational to believe, that God will prefer the State in Order, as well as the Church in such Condition. How then will any Christians, whose Belief is, that * *all shall appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ*, presume to violate that Form and Authority, by which the Catholick Church from the beginning of Christianity down to this Time, hath been govern'd and sanctified?

BUT these sacrilegious Invasions ought not to be expected from Heathen Unbelievers; if any who profess, and call themselves Christians, have joined themselves to the Aliens in these hostile Endeavours, I must take the Liberty to observe, that they are such who are *Contentious, and obey not the Truth*, and on whom the Mammon-God of this World hath too much Power.

FROM the Authority and Importance of Episcopacy, the Transition is very natural

Piety of praying for those who are called
 it, whether Prosperity displays the Favours
 God about them, or Adversity draws a Veil
 their Felicity. Which leads me,
 Lastly, To Apply this Discourse to the pre-
 Case of This Church, as far as the diffe-
 Condition of Christianity in the primitive
 times, and in this Nation at present, will in-
 gently admit.

I wou'd not be mistaken, to have any View
 persuade you, that the Case of this Church is
 be compared with the persecuted Condition
 St. Peter and his Followers. I am duely
 sensible that we are under the publick Coun-
 dance and Protection of a Christian Prince;
 who not only favours us with the free
 profession of our Religion, but also has him-
 chosen to profess it after the same most
 excellent Usage of the Church of *England*;
 who has taken upon him the Title and Charge
 being the Defender of the Catholick Chri-
 Faith in general, and the Guardian of
 national Church in particular, and has
 descended in Compliance to our Constitu-
 tion, to bind himself with an Oath, to pre-
 serve to us all the Rights and Privileges of it.

ALL that I intend in this Application is
 shew, that upon the Foot of Christian Cha-
 rity, and by the good Disposition of the Laws
 of this Country, and especially in dutiful Re-
 spect to the Episcopal Dignity, we may with a
 conscience void of Offence towards God, and

towards Men, pray for our Right Reverend Bishop in his present Confinement: And recommend him to the Prayers of this Assembly, as far as our Religion, and a peaceable Behaviour towards our temporal Superiors will justify us.

I am sensible the Charge is high and heinous for which he is in Prison; yet because our Religion teaches us to distinguish between Persons and Crimes, we may Reverence, love and pray fervently for the Prelate's Person, while we express a just Abhorrence of the Prelate's supposed Crime.

It is not long since the People of this Nation in general, as well as we our selves in particular, esteem'd him as a distinguish'd Ornament of our Church and Country, a Pious, Learned and Wise Bishop, a faithful Friend to all the Churches of Episcopal Distinction in *Great-Britain and Ireland*, an Able and Watchful Statesman, with a piercing Eye for the Defence to the tender Liberties and Properties of his Countrymen. And his peaceful appearance and Conformity, (before the present Objections,) to the Temporal and Ecclesiastical Laws of his Country, shou'd, in the candid Judgment of all them who have it not in their Power to prove him a publick Enemy, tend rather to remove, than to confirm the Supposition of his Guilt.

It was * *not the Manner of the Romans* in the State of Heathenism, *to deliver any Man to Die*, before legal Conviction; but it is not the justifiable Manner of Christians, to condemn any, *before that he who is accused, have the Accusers Face to Face, and have License to Answer for himself, concerning the Crime laid against him*; it being a Precept in Christianity, *to † judge nothing before the Time*, to prevent rash Judgment, and the charitable Construction of our own Laws, to deem every Person innocent till he is convicted.

THAT an innocent Person may be accused, may be condemned, may be executed, will be allow'd possible, and what has often happen'd. Our Saviour and his Apostles, and the whole noble Army of Martyrs, are immortal Instances of This. Yet this very rarely happens in any but persecuting States; and when in any State disavowing Persecution, it is when the Judges are *become abominable in their Doings*, or when *false Witnesses rise up, and lay to his Charge Things that he knew not*, and so by concealing the Malice and Perjury of the Accusation, make a just Judge pronounce an unjust Sentence. But as this Procedure is always shocking in Consideration, it is not to be expected in this Country, where Christianity is profess'd in its greatest Purity, and where the Offices of Humanity

* Acts xxv, 16.

† 1 Cor. iv, v.

are improv'd into the most endearing Treatment of Christian Charity.

NEVERTHELESS, an innocent Person may be confined, and honourably acquitted after Trial, without any just Reproach against the lawful Powers which committed him. By the Wisdom of every just Government in confining any Person accused (whether by false or true Witnesses, we do not now consider) takes only the necessary Caution to secure the supposed Criminal for a fair Trial. And therefore a Prisoner before his Trial, I humbly presume, is not in a *State of Punishment*, but of *safe Custody*; and therefore may be treated in his Confinement with that Respect and Charity, which were due to his former Reputation and Station, as far as to the Honour of the Publick, and the Leave of his Superiors will admit. And the Reason is, Because by our Laws no Fault should receive two Punishments for one Crime, I mean one antecedent to Conviction, and the other subsequent: And because a bare Accusation, though never so strongly laid, does not necessarily infer Guilt; and therefore is at least a just Ground for the Suspension of private Judgments, and leaves room for the Interpretations and Offices of Charity.

THESE Reasons alter nothing in the Case of a Bishop, and it is very reconcileable to Justice and Experience, that a Bishop may be innocent, and a lawful Prisoner. For we may

presume that the Episcopal Character does
 exempt those who are dignified with it, from
 Obedience to that State, which gives
 holy Persons and Religion Protection and
 maintenance : But They as Subjects, have ever
 been liable to the Treatment of Subjects, to
 be punish'd for State Offences, (though these
 those Cases which *most rarely* happen) and
 be imprison'd upon Suspicion of such. I
 not therefore plead against the just Animad-
 version of offensive Prelates, nor the neces-
 sary Securities which a wise Government should
 use, to bring them to it. Heretical Bishops,
 blasphemers of our Redeemer, are not more
 subject to be excommunicated by the Synod,
 than seditious ones to be depriv'd of their Tem-
 peralities by the State. We cannot expect that
 a Bishop, now under the Informations laid
 against him, shou'd enjoy the same Distinctions
 of Favour which a * *great Author* has inform'd
 he enjoy'd before, *i. e. always to obtain*
whatever he ask'd of his Majesty ; nor be
 heard in the House of Lords in his Place as
 before, *with a general Candor* ; where the
Author, the Point, the Force, and the Beauty
 of his Expressions delighted and convinc'd his
 friends, and gain'd him the Acknowledgement
 of his happy Eloquence from those who ap-
 prehending not the Weight of his Arguments,
 thought it necessary to oppose him. Now the
 Rea-

* Letter to the Clergy.

Reasons of State require his Imprisonment, it is enough if he is used with that Tenderness which a proper Concern for the Imprisonment of so great a Favourite, and so valuable a Subject requires, *i. e.* as the same *great Author* assures us, *with all possible Tenderness, and in the most honourable Place of Confinement.* I hope in this latter Respect, his Intelligence grounded upon the best Testimony, *viz.* the Frequency of his charitable Visits to our late ; agreeable to the intimated Command of our Saviour, to visit our Brethren, when *and in Prison*, which, though not allowed to all others, *his* unquestion'd Attachment to his Majesty, and the Ministry, and his seeing Intimacy with both, might perhaps enable him to gain him the Opportunities of making.

HOWEVER, we have had in the Memory of some in this Audience, some of the Episcopal Order delivered to the same Prison, not for the same Complaint, whose Innocence in the Conclusion prevailed for their Defence and Liberty : And I hope I may without Offence to those Great Men, who by their Office, and upon Information receiv'd, committed our Subject to the same Confinement, wish him the same Fate. For this, I presume, is no more than to wish him Innocent and an honourable Discharge, and what they themselves agreeable to the favourable Tendency of our own Laws as well as the Principles of Christianity, may be supposed to wish.

or if it be a Mark of Humanity and Love,
 in the Christian Disposition of our Laws,
 ded in the Divine Charity of the Gospel,
 ges to the meanest Subject and most ca-
 Offenders, to wish him, at the Commence-
 of his Tryal, *a good Deliverance* ; We
 not believe it the Intention of any of our
 ent Governours to with-hold this poor Wish
 safety from a *Christian Bishop* ; or that
 of them have such a Tyrannous Hate a-
 him, or are of so unmerciful a Dispo-
 as to, *say not so much as the Lord prosper*
we wish you good Luck in the Name of
Lord.

OR I humbly presume, that the Crown
 cer, who in the Arraignment of Offenders
 ounces this *Wish of Deliverance*, was O-
 ally directed, and is now understood, to
 are the Sense of the Sovereign, and the
 cuting Powers under him, who by the Na-
 of their Stations, ought to testify the ten-
 est Regard for the Life of the poorest Person
 Subjection to them ; and which we are in-
 n'd his present Majesty, by the Disposition
 his Nature, is singularly prone to.

may therefore upon the Principles of
 istian Charity, and the favourable Ten-
 cy of our own Laws, innocently presume,
 the Ministers of State, and the Honourable
 se of Commons, as well as the superior
 se of his own noble Peers, are in Christian
 rity towards the Person of their Prisoner,

and are well dispos'd to guard it from all Sufferings which the present Laws do not evidently inflict; and upon his Acquittment, express the same honourable Joy and Christian Congratulations, which his last Predecessor received upon the Evidences of his Innocence.

INDEED among the more ignorant and contentious sort of Men, we may find some a very uncharitable Disposition towards him, but it may be observed to our Prelate's Honour that these are Heretical or Schismatical Enemies of Christianity; and Men, who either out of Self-Conceit, or Prejudice against the Establishment of the Church, or willful Impiety, have burst the Bonds of Peace and Truth, and despise the Authority of Ecclesiastical Superiours; and it cannot be thought strange, that Refractory Christians, like naughty Children, wish their Government extinct.

BUT *we have not so learned Christ*, who in Regard to the Authority of the Holy Scriptures and the Opinion and Practice of the universal Church, have owned the Divine Appointment of our Episcopal Superiours, and submitted our selves to their Religious Rule and therefore ought to Pray for them on all Occasions, and especially when they are by any means *afflicted* or *distressed* in Mind, Body, or Estate. And, if as we are commanded, we esteem them *indeed* very highly in Love for their *Works sake*, we shall be carried higher in the Fervour of our Intercessions for their *fortune*

fortunes sake. I may then under all the Arguments of Nature and Revelation, apply to this Episcopal See, the Piety of interceding presently with God for the Holy Incumbent of

This was appointed the Sphere of his Government. Here is his Throne, and we justly at this Time lament his Absence from it. The best therefore we can do, is to partake of his Affliction, to ease it to him by a truly Christian Sympathy, and to sanctify it both to him and to our selves by Prayer.

THAT the Imprisonment of our holy Bishop is a just Cause of Affliction to him and his (whether it happened upon a just or unjust Accusation we are not now to consider) no Man can deny, who applies to himself the sorrowful Condition of a Prison. And this Condition is loaded with greater Hardship, when it becomes the Lot of a Person distinguished with high Dignity, under the Infirmary of Age or a tender Constitution; especially to a Right Reverend Bishop, *sitting as it were a Sparrow alone, upon the House-Top*, and so circumstanced, that he cannot behold the Countenances of his Children or of his Friends, without seeing them bedew'd with Filial Tears, or fill'd with Sorrow upon his Account; and when *his Lovers and his Neighbours stand looking as thro' a Glass, darkly upon his Trouble.* And though we shou'd suppose him under the consciousness of his own Integrity, (the best Con-

Consolation in his Case,) yet it must be allowed an Affliction to fall under the Displeasure of his Sovereign, and to suffer the unavoidable Consequences of lying under the Suspicion and Jealousy of a Christian State. Namely, To have the Mouth of the Slanderer opened upon him, and to be the Object of the Scorners imaginary Revenge, and to suffer sundry kinds of Death and Calumny, in the Opinion of his Enemies, before his Innocency can be manifested.

Upon these Accounts, His Confinement however regular in Reasons of State, and favourable in the Condition of it, is deplorable and draws down with an irresistible Vehemence the Compassion of Beholders, and kindles in all, who by the Favour of our Superiors view his Prison Grate, and upon whom He breathes out authoritative Benedictions, some Pious Ejaculations to God in his Behalf. It wou'd therefore very ill become us, *who under Christ are his People and the Sheep of his Pasture*, to be insensible of his present Condition, or not to express it in unfeigned Signs of filial Piety: At least, we shou'd be the first to do what the Laws of our Religion and Country do justify, *i. e.* as Christians to wish that Innocency may be found in him, as Englishmen to deem him innocent till he is convicted by Law, and as dutiful Adherents to our lawful Bishop, to declare constantly that *our Prayer, and earnest Desire to God for him, is, that he may be saved.* Saved, I mean

this World, to the Advantage and Honour
 of this Church and Nation, for I cannot doubt
 of his Salvation in the next.

LET therefore Hereticks, Schismatics and
 Sectaries expostulate concerning his Episco-
 pal Dignity, as the rebellious *Israelites* did a-
 gainst *Moses*, who made thee a Ruler, and
 Judge? To excuse the Fervency of their
 desires for his Liberty and Safety. We,
 who know that God hath assigned him to be
 a Ruler and Judge, ought after the Example
 of the primitive Followers of *St. Peter*, pray
 without ceasing, i. e. be ever disposed to in-
 tercede, and often exercised in our Interces-
 sions to God, for his Liberty upon Terms ho-
 nourable to his Judges and to himself. Lest
 the Charity of other Churches, who in regard
 of his Abilities, and in favourable Opinion still
 of his Integrity, have remember'd him in their
 pious Prayers, fill us, when we see his Face
 again, with just Confusion for our undutiful
 forgetfulness. We will then for our Brethren
 and Companion's sake wish him now Prospe-
 rity, yea, because of the House of the Lord
 our God, we will seek to do him good. By re-
 commending him to the Compassion of God,
 and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Con-
 solation of the Holy Ghost; and particularly
 beseeching God, that neither the Infirmary
 of his Body, nor the Circumstances of his Im-
 prisonment, may cut short that valuable Life,
 which the Glory of God, and the publick Good
 of

of Mankind, may by his honourable Rele
many more Years find eminently useful.

So rooted and grounded in a Christian a
Filial Charity, let us with a lively Faith
Christ, and an unfeigned Repentance for o
past Failings, approach the holy Altar, and
ceive the Sacrament in sincere Testimony
our Love to all Mankind, of our stedfast Co
munion with the Catholick Church, and p
ticularly of our firm Adherence to the est
lish'd Church, and to the lawful Bishop of t
Part of it to which we belong, bearing in o
Mind that Council of St. Paul, *Rememb
them that are in Bonds, as bound with them
and them that suffer Adversity, as being you
selves in the Body.*

F I N I S.

